

## BOOK REVIEWS



THE CARE OF DESTITUTE, NEGLECTED, AND DELINQUENT CHILDREN. By Homer Folks, superintendent of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania, 1890-1893; secretary of the New York State Charities Aid Association, 1893-1902; general-secretary of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, 1901-1902; Commissioner of Public Charities of the City of New York, 1902. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902.

This little book, attractive in its make-up, and costing only one dollar, is the first of a series aimed, as is stated by the editor in the preface, "to bring to bear on the practical problems of American social workers a concise knowledge of the historical evolution through which the charities of the country have passed." This volume, as each of the others to follow it will be, is practically complete in itself, as it deals with one general topic. Yet each social worker should plan to have the series in his working library. The editor is Herbert S. Brown, lately editor of *Charities*. This volume is limited to the history of the care of children the direction of whose lives and the burden of whose support have been undertaken by public authorities or private charity. Many activities, usually included under the term "child-saving," as agencies which help needy parents to keep the care of their children, will be considered in the volume on the care of needy families, and institutions for sick and defective children come under the topics of medical care and defectives. That the author of this book is eminently qualified to deal with its topic is well shown by its judicial and judicious tone—as would be expected from one who has held such important offices as he, and who is both a student and a practical administrator. Trained nurses are social workers, or should be such if they minister in hospitals, especially in maternity wards or dispensaries or as visiting nurses. As such, their influences may be great for good over individuals, and they should be interested and influential in working for better conditions of living and of care of the ill and needy.

The changes during the nineteenth century in the ways of caring for children in the United States by public aid and charity make interesting and instructive reading. Only a sketch of them is given in this little book, but it includes some details of particular institutions or local conditions which are probably typical of many others. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the situation may be summed up in general as follows, that destitute children taken as public charges were cared for with adult paupers in almshouses, or by material relief in their homes, or were placed under contract or bound out as apprentices; that children suffering from the neglect or immorality of their guardians remained with those unfit persons until all were destitute or until, the fruits of neglect being reaped, the children were sent as offenders to jails and prisons along with older offenders. One city had a municipal orphan asylum, and private asylums had been established in six other cities. While, early in the development in the care of children which followed, some young children were put out with nurses, the usual course of development was through the almshouse. We read, for instance, how, nearly at the middle of the century, the children who were public charges in New York City were gotten out of the almshouse buildings used for

adults, and from "the dilapidation of the old and wretched Long Island farm hovels," but were still under the care largely of adult paupers, vagrants, and even criminals from other city institutions. Not until a quarter century more had passed was legislation secured in the State of New York to forbid the retention of children in almshouses. The next marked tendencies, the possibilities for good of the old indenture system having passed away largely with changing industrial conditions, were the increase in the institutions solely for care of children, and in a few States, as Massachusetts and Michigan, the placing-out and oversight of children under a State agency. Then came the formation of children's aid societies, aiming to place out children in selected houses, carefully watched, instead of congregating them. The growth of the public-school system helped this great step forward. So has the use of boarding homes for children not easily or not advantageously placed in free homes. The system of public subsidies to provide institutions for children is shown to result in marked tendencies to the increase of public charges. Of late, in leading communities where such a system has existed, very careful checks through public supervision of children accepted as public charges are required by law. As between such a modified system and that of State care of public charges, the State care seems to be now in the lead. The tendency is for public authorities to take charge of children who are to be separated from their families for a long time, and for other children to be treated with their families or removed for brief times, by private charitable agencies. The history of juvenile reformation during the century is summed up as the removal of young offenders from association with adults and their treatment from an educational and reformatory point of view. The most recent movement in this is for the greater use of the probation system, with special judicial officers for children.

The number of children in the country in institutions and placed out in homes by agencies is estimated to be at least a hundred and fifty thousand. The century just closed has seen great advances, but we need to know more of the care given, of the actual results of different methods used. To be interested in promoting in each and every community the best methods is a work of great value to individuals and society.

T. B.

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#### BOOKS TO BE READ TO PATIENTS

"THE LANE THAT HAD NO TURNING," by Gilbert Parker, is another book of short stories, this time of the French-Canadian people and country Parker has so perfectly made his own. The stories are full of that vague sadness of the winds, the woods, and of brooks murmuring at twilight, but holding an immense compassion for "the failures, the suffering, and the husks of evil." ("The House with the Tall Porch.") If several stories might be selected for this very quality of pitying understanding of those whose lanes have no turning, they might be "The Worker in Stone," "The House with the Tall Porch," "The Golden Pipes," and "The Tragic Comedy of Annette."

Very, very different is "THE PINES OF LORY," by J. A. Mitchell. A rather serious beginning is immediately merged into a most deliciously improbable little tale of two decidedly modern Robinson Crusoes. One of them is certainly a Gibson girl!

It seems to be Mr. Mitchell's forte in this story to bring us again and again to the very verge of expecting something just a little more serious than the thing